

Community Technology Fund

2000 Grants

Project: ONE Library

Entity: Norfolk Public Library, Columbus Public Library, Northeast Nebraska Community College Library/Resource Center

Award: \$ 25,000

Norfolk Public Library, Columbus Public Library, and Northeast Community College Library/Resource Center formed a consortium (ONE Library) to jointly purchase and share a library automation system. ONE Library (<http://www.onelibraryne.org/>) allows access to the informational holdings (online databases, material collections, full-text journals, community resources, special papers, etc.) of the consortium members. Using the Internet, patrons can access the holdings of all member libraries. Patrons are enthusiastic about the new system. In addition to basic bibliographic information, patrons can view book jacket covers, book summaries, table of contents, and short author biographies.

The consortium saved thousands of dollars over the cost of purchasing separate systems. The cost of the software for three libraries sharing one license was almost one-third less than the cost of three libraries purchasing software separately. Columbus and Norfolk will each also save about \$7,000 per year in service maintenance.

Project: Public Internet Access Enhancement

Entity: City of Kearney

Award: \$19,380

Since 1994, the Technology Learning Center in the Kearney Public Library and Information Center has provided computer and Internet training as well as public access to computers. Eleven new computers were purchased for the Technology Learning Center. The Learning Center averages over 50 patrons per day, primarily for Internet access.

Project: Public Library System Web Catalog

Entity: Public Library System, Holdrege

Award: \$9,218

The Public Library System of Holdrege has published its catalog on the World Wide Web (<http://www.socentral.lib.ne.us>.) The Public Library System of Holdrege, Nebraska serves 14,533 citizens and includes the Holdrege Public Library, the Phelps County Library, the South Central Regional Library and the Holdrege Interlibrary Loan Center (HILL). The new Web site and catalog allow customers with Internet access to check on the availability of library materials nearly twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week. In the first six months of operation, the Web catalog averaged over 155 site hits and generated an average of over 40 hold requests per month.

Project: Connecting Nebraska E-Business Project

Entities: University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension and Center for Rural Community Revitalization, the AIM Institute, and the Rural Development Commission

Award: \$52,000

The Applied Information Management (AIM) Institute, University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Center for Applied Rural Innovation (CARI) cooperatively addressed the information technology needs of rural Nebraska businesses. The report *Nebraska Business Use of Information Technology* (available at <http://www.aimlink.org/pdf/nuseofit.pdf>) examined how rural Nebraska businesses are using information technology. The report found that Nebraska business owners and managers projected rapid growth in the use of information technology in their businesses. The report concluded:

“From an economic development perspective, it is absolutely critical that Nebraska businesses and entrepreneurs have the access and knowledge to use information technology to remain competitive and expand market opportunities.”

This project also provided training to community members and business people. The Nebraska Electronic Main Street e-commerce training program was offered at 26 sites. Twenty-seven sites hosted the Master Navigator Internet training program. An advanced e-commerce curriculum was also developed.

Project: Web Parent Teacher Project

Entity: Elmwood-Murdock Public Schools

Award: \$22,270.00

The Web Parent-Teacher Program created a volunteer position for each elementary classroom called a "Web parent", similar to the traditional "room parent", to assist the classroom teacher with creating a Web page for that classroom and updating the Web page throughout the school year. The program trained volunteer Web parents and classroom teachers on Web page development skills and Internet skills. A bi-monthly online newsletter publicized the work being done at the school and encouraged use of the Internet. Elementary schools students worked with high school students to sell popcorn online as a fundraiser.

2001 Grants

Final Reports are due June 17 and this document will be updated as the reports are received.

Project: Aurora Technology Center (formerly the Aurora Technology Business Incubator)

Entity: City of Aurora

Award: \$25,000

Status: Final report pending.

The City of Aurora has developed a technology business incubator. The renovated facility offers broadband Internet access, a technology training center, and conference room as well as office space. The Aurora Technology Center provides technology and office support, technical consultation, professional consultation, and education and networking experiences. The technology center currently has five clients and several prospective clients.

Project: Creating a Common Framework for Integrating Surface Water Data

Entity: Lower Platte North Natural Resources District

Award: \$24,800

Status: Reports pending.

The Lower Platte North Natural Resources District is facilitating inter-agency collaboration and multipurpose use of water data by developing a standardized database of surface water features.

Project: Taking Resources and Information Online (TRIO)

Entites: Bruun Memorial Public Library of Humboldt, the Humboldt Public School Library-Media Center, and the Table Rock-Steinauer School Library-Media Center

Award: \$18,600

Status: Final report pending.

The Bruun Memorial Public Library of Humboldt, the Humboldt Public School Library-Media Center, and the Table Rock-Steinauer School Library-Media Center formed a consortium to jointly purchase and share a library automation system. Project partners are pleased with the new system.

Project: Technology-Based Education for Health Occupations

Entity: Southeast Community College

Award: \$18,195

Status: Final report pending.

Southeast Community College has developed 13 radiologic technology courses and 7 surgical technology courses for online use to address the shortage of medical technicians in rural Nebraska. The overall student retention rate for the online program is 92% and the overall employment rate of program graduates in rural hospitals is 100%.

Project: Senior Connection

Entity: Beatrice Public Library

Award: \$22,932

Status: Final report pending.

The Beatrice Public Library has partnered with the Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging to provide instruction to senior citizens on the use of the Internet. Peer volunteers have trained nearly 100 users at the Senior Center on using e-mail and other Internet applications. Several senior citizens had computers at home but needed help learning how to use them. Others have purchased new computers since receiving training. The Senior Center had a card party as a fundraiser for the ADSL service and raised enough money to pay for two years worth of service.

Project: Telehealth

Entity: Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Award: \$25,000

Status: A three-month extension has been granted.

The Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing will establish a videoconferencing network to provide mental health services for deaf and hard of hearing people in the Panhandle. Higher than expected telecommunications charges have been a barrier to the implementation of this project.

Project: Omaha Tribe Online Information Technology Plan

Entity: Omaha Tribe of Nebraska

Award: \$25,000

Status: Final report pending.

The Omaha Tribe of Nebraska and its consultant have developed an information technology plan, including a needs assessment and problem identification; recommendations regarding telecommunications resources; recommendations regarding hardware and software; an implementation timeline; IT budget; identification of funding resources; and a review of current federal and state legislation.

The plan includes four broad recommendations:

1. Establish a tribal management information systems department.
2. Require computer applications training for current staff.
3. Develop and maintain departmental enterprise specific databases.
4. Develop tribal member IT expertise for career development.

Project: Brainard Community Technology Center

Entity: Village of Brainard

Award: \$18,495

Status: Final report pending.

The Village of Brainard has developed a community technology center, offering a variety of technology classes on making address labels, genealogy, surfing the Internet, children's Web sites, mapping out trips, and using e-Bay. Volunteers are also using technology to preserve the heritage, history, and resources of the area. Over 250 family stories have been collected for the Qa125 history book. A Web site is also being developed for the community. The community is also using information technology to improve record keeping and to access information. The Village clerk is using e-mail to correspond with other village clerks. The Brainard Volunteer Fire Department has purchased a computer for record keeping.

Project: KCH Clinic Integrated Practice Management and Electronic Medical Record Project

Entity: Kimball County Hospital Clinic

Award: \$25,000

Status: Final report pending.

The Kimball County Hospital Clinic is implementing an electronic medical record system to improve patient care and increase efficiency. Even though the capability to scan patient records has only been available since mid-November, it is apparent that this will reduce personnel costs in the long-term and improve patient care.

Project: Greeley Learning and Technology Center

Entity: Village of Greeley

Award: \$23,500

Status: Final report pending.

In cooperation with Greeley Public Schools, the Village of Greeley has established a Learning and Technology Center in the school library to provide accessible, up-to-date resources, training and education to residents of Greeley County. Users range from pre-school to retired people.

Project: City of Lincoln Technology Infrastructure Audit

Entity: City of Lincoln

Award: \$23,500

Status: Complete

The City of Lincoln and its contracted evaluator completed a technology audit. The results were presented to the Mayor's Technology Council on April 10, 2002. The Technology Council is in the process of utilizing the results of the technology audit in combination with committee team reports to develop a coordinated community-wide technology infrastructure plan of action. The assessment is available at <http://www.ci.lincoln.ne.us/city/mayor/tech/pdf/techrprt.pdf>.

Three key findings resulted from the audit:

1. Essential elements are in place in Lincoln to make the community successful in the New Economy.
2. The need exists for a unified approach to develop and implement initiatives to make Lincoln competitive in the New Economy.
3. None of the benchmark communities have a clear competitive advantage over Lincoln.

Project: From Plowshares to PCs: Creating a Learning Community in South Central Nebraska

Entities: Central Community College--Holdrege Center and the University of Nebraska
Cooperative Extension--Phelps/Gosper Counties

Award: \$23,500

Status: Final report pending.

Central Community College--Holdrege Center and the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension--Phelps/Gosper Counties surveyed businesses regarding their information technology training needs and have delivered information technology training in South Central Nebraska.